

EMERGENCY REPAIR POLICY
Office of Building and Fire Code Administration
301 King Street, Room 4200
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Revised 9.1.2008

Office: 703.838.4360

Fax: 703.838.3880

Website: alexandriava.gov

When performing after hours emergency repairs or installation jobs for work requiring permits, the following is authorized by Section 108.1 of the 2006 Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC):

“....applications for emergency construction , alterations or equipment replacement shall be submitted by the end of the first working day that follows the day such work commences.”

The permit must be obtained the next business day. Faxed application shall not serve as the official application. The submitted application must bear the original signatures of the applicant and the master tradesman where required.

The procedure for this office will be:

1. The work performed must constitute a true emergency. Scheduled replacement or repair work does not constitute an emergency. For the purposes of this policy, examples of emergencies are the:

- replacement of gas fueled water heaters (note: electric water heaters do not require replacement permits)
- repair/replacement of a leaking/ruptured/broken gas or water line;
- replacement of a residential heating system between the dates of **October 15 to May 1** when the heat must be supplied to maintain a temperature of not less than 65E F (18EC) in all habitable rooms (PM602.2)^a;
- replacement of a heating system in occupied work spaces required to maintain a temperature of 68EF (18EC) between **October 1 to May 15**. Exceptions include processing, storage and operation areas that require cooling or special temperature conditions and areas in which persons engage in vigorous physical activities (PM602.3);
- replacement of residential cooling supply systems between **May 15 to October 1** to maintain a temperature of not more than 80EF (27EC) in all habitable rooms;
- repair or removal of structures, or parts of structures, that are unsafe and/or in danger of collapse and pose a life/safety hazard for human occupancy. This determination of “unsafe” or “in danger of collapse,” must be made by the Building Official. After hours, an agent of the Building Official can be reached by calling the Emergency Operations Center of the Fire Department on **703.838.4660**.

2. A completed permit application will be faxed to the Office of Building and Fire Code Administration on **703.838.3880**. Applications may be downloaded from the City Web Page, alexandriava.gov/fire/code ,and must identify:

- the entire scope of the work;
- the location of the work - including floor, unit number, or tenant space when applicable;
- contractor license information – to include City Business license information; and
- the printed name, signature and a contact phone number of the permit applicant.

Once received, the faxed application will be entered into the computer tracking system in a Pending Status. The faxed application will be held in a pending file and discarded when the original application is received.

The permit must be obtained the next business day.

3. In accordance with Section 113.3 of the USBC, at minimum, all issued permits require approved inspections:

1. before concealment; and
2. upon completion of the work.

Failing to request concealment inspections may result in the work being re-opened for inspections.

The permit holder, who is always the property owner, is responsible for obtaining required inspections. Contractors may obtain permits and request inspections as an agent for the property owner. However, since the USBC holds the permit holder responsible for these actions, it is strongly recommended that all written contracts **specifically state** who will be handling these functions.

Whenever possible, it is recommended that the contractor who performed the work, or someone with technical expertise, be present at the time of the inspection to correct any defective work cited. This is extremely important in the event of natural gas or Carbon Monoxide leaks that may become explosive and/or deadly if not immediately corrected. **It is also recommended that the final payment for the completed work be contingent upon receiving an approved final inspection from this office.** Failure to have defective work corrected and re-inspected to receive an approved final inspection, may result in the insurance carrier for the property not honoring claims.

Before issuing a pro-active Stop Work Order, the field inspector shall contact the front office to determine if a faxed application has been received. If a faxed application has been received, the inspector shall issue a written reminder to obtain the permit the next business day and to schedule required inspections. If a faxed application has not been received, the inspector shall issue a written reminder to fax in the application and to obtain the required permit and inspections.

When the permit is not obtained the next business day, a New Construction Supervisor will be notified and a Stop Work Order may be issued. When a Stop Work Order is issued, a fee of two times the regular permit fee, or \$200, whichever is lesser, will be charged in addition to the regular permit fee. When a contractor violates this policy by not obtaining a permit or not having the work inspected, a violation letter will be sent to the State Board for Contractors (DPOR) for enforcement action in accordance with the Standards of Practice and Conduct set forth in the Contractor Rules and Regulations manual. These Standards of Practice and Conduct can be found on the web site for the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations (DPOR), dpor.virginia.gov.

When permits are obtained under a Property Owner's Affidavit and a contractor is subsequently hired to perform the work, the contractor licensing information must be submitted to this office. If the property owner does not provide the contractor information to this office, or if an unlicensed contractor is used to perform the work, the permit will be voided and the matter referred to the City Attorney's office for prosecution of both the property owner and the unlicensed contractor. A letter will also be sent to DPOR to investigate the unlicensed contractor.

For more information on permit requirements and plan submission, please visit our website, alexandriava.gov/fire/code. If you have any questions about the information contained in this memo, please contact our Engineering Aides on **703.838.4360**.

^a When heat or cooling is required "off-season" due to health concerns or other specific reasons, please note the reason on the faxed application or call the office and speak with a staff member. Field inspection staff will then be informed so that a Stop Work Order is not issued.